

In comparing these units as mowing equipment, very little difference can be claimed for either in performance and effectiveness in mowing weeds. However, as previously mentioned, there is considerable advantage in the larger unit over the smaller unit in that the larger tractor may be used for a longer period in maintaining roads with a multiple-blade planer. This larger tractor is so constructed that it was possible for us to mount complete repair and grinding equipment on it, thus eliminating the necessity of servicing this mowing unit from the central garage. This feature, not possible on the smaller unit, is very advantageous and economical.

In conclusion, let me suggest that every county equip itself to cope properly with this important problem of mowing weeds; for, although this operation appears to be costly at the outset, it will, I believe, ultimately prove to be an actual economy.

## USING STATISTICAL RECORDS IN ENLISTING THE SUPPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

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Preparing statistics for the county council and the general public comes very close to being propaganda. The three heads under which the method I shall discuss can be divided are: (a) pictorial; (b) written articles, and (c) oral conversation.

Prior to the meeting of the county council in September of 1937, I prepared a report on the condition of the bridges in the county needing extensive and immediate repair. I had the district superintendents of the county highway department prepare a list of bridges needing repair in their respective districts. I then visited each of the bridges and took pictures showing the need for repairs to the various parts of the structure in poor condition. A total of over 100 pictures were taken, and these were enlarged and pasted in an exhibit book. Below each picture were shown the name of the bridge and other items necessary to identify its location, the estimated value when new, the necessary repairs, and the estimated cost of repairs. The majority of the council members are farmers living in widely scattered sections of the county. Each was familiar with the bridges in his own locality, and could identify those bridges as the pictures were shown to him.

Several years ago I drove the council as a body over the county, and we inspected the bridges that needed repair at that time. However, as it is difficult to assemble the members without a special call, it proved more satisfactory to take the pictures and display them in the regular meeting, supplementing the display by a talk on the necessity of repairs.

In order to reach the general public, written articles in county newspapers are of great value. These should be illustrated by pictures.

During the spring thaw of last February and March, the Benton County roads became very unstable. All the roads were posted against heavy hauling. However, several truck operators persisted in hauling heavy loads at night when the highway department had no means of warning them off the roads. Several times during that period, we had patrols out at night; but apparently the truck operators knew the nights that we were going to patrol the roads, because we failed to find any violation of posted signs. The damage done by hauling at night finally became so great that articles were published in each newspaper of the county with cuts illustrating the damaged roads. It was stated that hauling at night was being carried on, and that the highway department was perfectly aware of it and had a very good idea of who the operators were. The articles went on to state that the roads in the county belonged to the traveling public, and that it was just as much their affair to prevent damage to the roads and report violations to the proper authorities as it was the duty of the highway department. They also stated that after the emergency was past and the roads became stable again, any criticism regarding conditions of the roads that had been damaged would not be tolerated, especially from any of the truck owners in the county, inasmuch as the condition of those roads could be traced back directly to the damage caused by the hauling operations in the winter time.

These articles received very favorable comment from the general public. I, as head of the highway department, was stopped several times during the spring and summer on the streets of various towns in the county and given information as to who had caused the damage in the preceding spring. Various people said that the highway department was not to blame for the condition of certain roads. They realized that the cost of repair would be quite large, and that some of the roads would not be in good condition again for some time.

In some cases, the repairs to bridges consisted of widening the roadway and extending abutments to accommodate the increased width. The necessity for widening the road was shown by pictures of two cars about to pass each other, showing the necessity for one car to remain on one side of the bridge while the other crossed the bridge. Also farm implements, such as hay-racks and discs, were posed near the approach to the bridge, showing that frequently it was impossible to move the implement across.

About three years ago, there was quite a bit of agitation in regard to extending State Road 18 and State Road 352 from their termini to the Illinois State line. The proposed extension

amounted to 21 miles altogether, 10 miles on State Road 18, and 11 miles on State Road 352. Present at a dinner meeting in Fowler one evening, were business men from all the towns affected by the proposed extension of the two roads. They presented statistics at this meeting showing the cost of maintenance of these 21 miles of county road, and the cost of material and labor necessary to bring the road up to first-class condition. I also presented figures showing the cost of the additional right-of-way necessary, in order that the roads could be taken into the State Highway System. Inasmuch as the additional right-of-way required did not involve a very large acreage, the amount of money required to purchase this right-of-way was far below the amount necessary to reconstruct and maintain the roads as a part of the county system. The business men at that meeting passed a resolution asking the state to take over these two roads, and at the present time they are a part of the state system. The county paid out money, of course, for right-of-way; but we feel that this was a good investment, since it was much less than the money that would have been paid out had we kept both roads under our jurisdiction.

Three years ago, during the hysteria about high taxes, the meetings of the county council were attended by various farm organizations. Apparently they were there to see that taxes were reduced and kept within a reasonable limit. The council asked the officers of these associations to state their views on the various items in the budget. When the highway budget was being discussed, the organizations considered that the amount of money received by this county for the maintenance of roads was excessive. They did not understand that this fund came from the gasoline tax and motor vehicle license fees, alone, and not one cent from personal or property tax. They argued that this fund should be reduced considerably. I had prepared statistics showing that 60 cents out of each dollar of motor-vehicle revenue received by our county came from the pockets of motorists in other more populous counties of the state, and that these protesters paid no personal or property tax towards the maintenance of roads. In fact, they paid no road tax at all, unless they operated motor vehicles. I also proved that the maintenance of 750 miles of roads with the expenditure of \$77,000 was just a trifle over \$100 per mile, or about \$8.00 per mile per month. This \$8.00 maintained the road, added material where necessary, removed snow, cut brush, opened side ditches, and provided other necessary drainage and the repair of bridges and culverts for this one mile of road. After being confronted by these figures and other facts applying to the county road situation, and realizing that the figures could be verified by inspection of the records in the auditor's office, the organizations said nothing more then or later about reduction of county road funds.